

## SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF SUICIDE IN JAKARTA

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*Telah dilakukan suatu penelitian untuk mendapatkan data mengenai karakteristik peristiwa bunuh diri di Jakarta yang meliputi dari tahun 1964 – 1968. Pengumpulan data diperoleh dari journal penerbitan Bagian Forensic Medicine Universitas Indonesia dan data penduduk berdasarkan atas sensus tahun 1961. Selama periode penelitian menunjukkan bahwa peristiwa bunuh diri di Jakarta 1.26 tiap 100.000 penduduk, dan angka yang tertinggi terdapat pada golongan laki-laki (1.82 per 100.000 penduduk) khususnya pada golongan umur 65 tahun lebih. Begitu pula pada golongan wanita angka tertinggi adalah pada golongan umur 65 tahun lebih. Sedangkan pada periode yang hampir sama di Australia 14.5, Philippina 0.7, Jepang 15.2 dan Hongaria 28.6. Golongan wanita lebih banyak melakukan bunuh diri dengan cara menggantung diri daripada laki-laki, sedangkan sebaliknya golongan laki-laki lebih banyak melakukan bunuh diri dengan menggunakan racun. Faktor2 sosial ekonomi dan budaya perlu mendapat perhatian dalam rangka mempelajari epidemiologi bunuh diri di Indonesia. Selanjutnya data2 yang lebih lengkap sangat diperlukan untuk mempersiapkan usaha pencegahan dalam bidang kesehatan jiwa.*

The act of suicide is influenced by various factors. These factors may be grouped into the epidemiologic triad, namely: agent, host and environment. The inter-actions of these triad are already operating in the period of pre-pathogenesis. Suicide therefore, may be considered as a bio-socio-psychological process which terminates after the successful accomplishment of the act, resulting in death. Various authors classify suicide in many ways. Durkheim (1951) differentiate suicide into egoistic, anomic & altruistic. Chesser (1968) differentiate suicide into partial and total suicide; each of which is further subdivided into normal and pathologic. However, official records use the terminology: suicide and tentamina suicide only. This study deals with suicide, meaning successful suicide in Jakarta. The objective of this study is to get an idea of the characteristics of suicide. And it is hoped that this report will result in the compilation and maintenance of more pertinent data about suicide, both attempted and successful suicide in Indonesia, by those government services concerned with this subject.

### MATERIAL AND METHOD

All deaths in Jakarta due to accidents, homicides and suicide as well as deaths suspected of being in this category are sent by the police to the Department of Forensic Medicine of the University of Indonesia for a visum et repertum. This Department, upon the request of the police, will perform either an external examination only – namely to study the injuries inflicted superficially – or an autopsy to investigate the cause of death.

The data of this report was obtained from the Department of Forensic Medicine of the University of Indonesia, extracted from its journal with suicide as the suspected cause of death. Data on the population of Jakarta was calculated based on the sensus of 1961 (Almanak Indonesia, 1968).

### RESULTS

*Age and sex.* The number of suicide during the five-year period 1964–1968 in Jakarta was 183. The rate per 100.000 inhabitants over 10 years of age was 1.26. The rate is increasing progressively with age. The rate for males was 1.82, whilst that for females was 0.74.

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Table 1. Suicide by age group and sex Jakarta, 1964 — 1968

Age group	T o t a l		M a l e s		Females	
	Average pop. per year	No. of suicide (Rate per 100,000)	Average pop. per year	No. of suicide (Rate per 100,000)	Average pop. per year	No. of suicide (Rate per 100,000)
10 — 14	371,878	2 (0.11)	185,567	—	186,311	2 (0.21)
15 — 24	910,892	37 (0.81)	453,625	24 (1.06)	457,267	12 (0.52)
25 — 44	1,224,271	99 (1.58)	465,191	74 (2.29)	579,080	25 (0.87)
45 — 64	300,851	24 (1.59)	157,041	17 (2.17)	143,810	6 (0.83)
65 and over	55,048	14 (5.73)	23,561	12 (10.19)	31,487	2 (1.27)
Not recorded	—	7	—	7	—	—
	2,862,940	183 (1.26)	1,464,985	134 (1.82)	1,397,955	47 (0.74)

It can be seen that more than twice the number of males were committing successful suicides than females. In both sexes the highest frequency occurred in the 65 years and over group. *Methods of suicide.* The most frequently used method of suicide were hanging 55.10 per cent and poisoning 7.60 per cent.

In Jakarta, females chose hanging as their method in 72.72 per cent of their suicides while males chose this method only in 48.90

per cent. The contrary is true for poisoning as the method of suicides, 8.75 per cent was committed by males as against 4.55 per cent by females.

*Methods by age.* Under the age of 25, poisoning was used most often, namely 10.26 per cent. The next method used by those under 25 years was shooting 5.13 per cent. No females in Jakarta committed suicide using fire-arms in the 1964 — 1968 period.

Table 2. Methods of suicide by sex and age group (percentage).

Methods	Total Frequency No. %	Sex *)		Age Group **)		
		Males No. %	Females No. %	10—24 years	25—44 years	45 years over
Fire arm	4 (2.10)	4 (2.91)	0	2 (5.13)	2 (2.00)	0
Burning	6 (3.20)	3 (2.17)	3 (6.82)	1 (2.56)	3 (3.00)	1 (2.70)
Hanging	101 (55.01)	67 (48.90)	32 (72.72)	22 (56.41)	52 (52.00)	26 (70.27)
Poisoning	14 (7.60)	12 (8.75)	2 (4.55)	4 (10.26)	7 (7.00)	3 (8.11)
Jumping	1 (0.50)	0	1 (2.27)	0	1 (1.00)	0
Strangling	11 (6.50)	9 (6.64)	2 (4.55)	1 (2.56)	7 (7.00)	1 (2.70)
Sharp tools	4 (2.10)	3 (2.17)	1 (2.27)	0	2 (2.00)	1 (2.70)
Not recorded	42 (22.90)	39 (28.46)	3 (6.82)	9 (23.08)	26 (26.00)	5 (13.52)
Total	183 (100.00)	139 (100.00)	44 (100.00)	39 (100.00)	100 (100.00)	37 (100.00)

## DISCUSSION

The striking fact disclosed in this report is that Jakarta with a population of over 4 million people has such a low suicide rate of 1.26 per 100.000. Santiago on the other hand, with a population of almost 2 million (1961) has a rate of 15.89 per 100.000.—

It is interesting to study further whether there is a correlation between the philosophy of the state and the way of life of the people and suicide. Pancasila or the five pillars making up the foundation of the Indonesian Republic includes Belief in the Omnipotence of the Almighty as the first principle. Tolerance and mutual aid are the outward manifestations of the Indonesian people's dealing with one another and with foreign people alike.

Neighbouring countries of Indonesia like Australia and the Philippines have suicide rates of 14.5 and 0.7 respectively in 1964. In Asia Japan has the highest suicide rate of 15.2 in the same year. The highest rate in the world in 1964 was 28.6 in Hungaria which rose to 29.8 the following year.

The choice of methods of suicide showed the converse situation as happened in Santiago.

Fire-arms as a method of suicide in Jakarta

is exclusively used by males. Fire-arms are licensed in Indonesia and only the armed forces are entrusted with carrying it to perform their duties.

Further data on socio-cultural and socio-economic factors were not as yet available, hence no comments can be given on those aspects.

## SUMMARY

A study of successful suicides in Jakarta during the 1964 – 1968 period revealed a higher suicide rate for men, particularly those of the 65 years and over. Also in women, the highest rate was in the 65 years and older age group.

Women used hanging as the method of suicide more frequently than men, while men used poisons more frequently than women as the method of suicide.

Data on socio-economic and socio-cultural factors should also be included in the formal records of those committing suicide, so as to facilitate the epidemiological study of suicide in Indonesia.

Disclosures of pertinent facts on this act would lead to the organization of preventive measures in this field of mental health.

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